

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE REPORT ON OMNITRACS VMS UNIT REPLACEMENT

Omnitracs VMS Units Must be Replaced by April 1, 2020

The McMurdo 'Omnitracs' Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) operated by vessels in the West Coast Groundfish Fishery will no longer be supported by its satellite provider after March 31, 2020. All current owners of the Omnitracs unit were notified via a letter from McMurdo dated December 19, 2019.

What should you know if you own an Omnitracs unit?

- This VMS unit must be replaced by April 1, 2020 or vessel owners/operators will risk being out of compliance with VMS regulations in the West Coast Region (WCR). The unit will not function with any other satellite provider.
- List of [Type-Approved VMS Units](#).
- McMurdo has a replacement unit called 'Omnicom' that functions with the Iridium satellite network. This VMS unit is not yet approved for use in the WCR.
- Vessel owner/operators with questions about their current service or the new Omnicom unit should contact McMurdo directly at 800-262-8722 or at fleetsupport@orolia.com.

What is NOAA doing to help vessels with Omnitracs units?

- We are working with McMurdo to test their new Omnicom VMS unit so that we can recommend it for approval. However, we cannot say how long this process will take, but are making it a priority.
- Vessel owner/operators with questions on NOAA's VMS reimbursement program or their eligibility for VMS reimbursement should contact the Office of Law Enforcement's (OLE) Helpdesk at 888-219-9228 or ole.helpdesk@noaa.gov. Please be aware this reimbursement program is managed by our OLE Headquarters in Silver Spring, MD versus by OLE's West Coast Division in Seattle, WA.

General VMS reimbursement guidance:

- A vessel owner may be reimbursed for the cost of a new unit *if* they have *not* received a previous reimbursement for a unit purchased for that vessel.
- If a vessel owner *was* previously reimbursed for the cost of a unit for that vessel, then the government will *not* issue a second reimbursement for another unit if the government did not cause their current unit to become non-compliant.

General VMS questions:

- Please contact the West Coast VMS Team at 888-585-5518 or wcd.vms@noaa.gov.